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# Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 012708

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. FRANGIE-ASAD SUMMIT THREATENED BY FIGHTING

WHILE THE ASAD-FRANGIE MEETING HAS NOT BEEN CANCELLED, NO DATE HAS YET BEEN SET, AND IT APPEARS FRANGIE WILL INSIST ON A CEASEFIRE BEFORE GOING TO DAMASCUS. ANY CHANCE FOR AN EARLY END TO THE FIGHTING DETERIORATED IN THE LAST 24 HOURS, HOWEVER, DUE TO:

--SEVERE FIGHTING IN NEARLY ALL BATTLE ZONES;

--GROWING PALESTINIAN INVOLVEMENT IN ATTACKS ON RIGHT-IST BASTIONS; AND

--THE ATTACK BY LEBANESE MILITARY AIRCRAFT ON LEFTIST
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PAGE 02 STATE 012708

POSITIONS. (CONFIDENTIAL) BEIRUT 542, 1/16.)

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

2. COD WAR: BRITISH PESSIMISTIC

AN FCO OFFICER HAS TOLD EMBASSY LONDON THERE IS NO INDICATION THE LUNS TRIP TO ICELAND PRODUCED ANY MOVEMENT TOWARD A SETTLEMENT. LUNS FLOATED THE UK'S OFFER TO WITHDRAW ALL

BRITISH VESSELS FOR ONE WEEK IF ICELAND AGREES TO COMPROMISE BUT GOT NO RESPONSE. LUNS WILL BRIEF CALLAGHAN ON THE TRIP WHEN THEY MEET ON JANUARY 19.

PRIME MINISTER HALLGRIMSSON MEANWHILE TOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING LUNS' DEPARTURE:

--LUNS IS CARRYING NO MESSAGE TO HMG FROM THE GOI;

--AN UNCONDITIONAL WITHDRAWAL MUST TAKE PLACE, PROBABLY WITHIN A WEEK, IF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS ARE TO SURVIVE; AND,

--ONCE THIS IS DONE, NEW NEGOTIATIONS COULD TAKE PLACE, ALTHOUGH THE NEGOTIATING MARGIN IS VERY SMALL. (CONFIDENTIAL) LONDON 808 AND (UNCLASSIFIED) REYKJAVIK 93, 1/16.)

3. ITALY: INITIAL CONSULTATIONS PRODUCE NO RESULTS

CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN PREMIER-DESIGNATE MORO AND SOCIALIST LEADER DEMARTINO ON JANUARY 15 PRODUCED NO VISIBLE MOVEMENT TOWARD SETTLING THE GOVERNMENT CRISIS. THE SOCIALISTS ARE ADHERING TO THEIR DEMANDS ON THE ECONOMIC PROGRAM AND FOR "ASSOCIATION" OF THE COMMUNISTS WITH THE GOVERNING MAJORITY.

EMBASSY COMMENT: WHILE NOT ANXIOUS FOR EARLY ELECTIONS, THE DC GIVES THE IMPRESSION OF BEING WILLING TO TAKE THIS RISK RATHER THAN COMPROMISE, PARTICULARLY ON COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION. THE COMMUNISTS ALSO WOULD PREFER TO AVOID EARLY ELECTIONS BUT IN THEIR CURRENT NO-LOSE POSITION HAVE LITTLE REASON TO FEAR THEM. (CONFIDENTIAL) ROME 773, CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 STATE 012708

1/16.)

4. FRG: IMPLICATIONS OF LOWER SAXONY GOVERNMENT CHANGE

EMBASSY BONN REPORTS THAT THE SURPRISE ELECTION OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT MINISTER-PRESIDENT ALBRECHT IN HANNOVER ON JANUARY 15 WILL HAVE NATIONAL REPERCUSSIONS. IF ALBRECHT CAN FORM A GOVERNMENT IN LOWER SAXONY IMPORTANT FEDERAL

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

LEGISLATION COULD POSSIBLY BE STYMIED AND THE POLISH AGREEMENTS MIGHT ALSO BE JEOPARDIZED. DURING A CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND, CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE PUZZLEMENT OVER THE ELECTION. HE COULD NOT EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED BUT FELT THE RESULTS WERE CLEARLY BAD.

EMBASSY COMMENT: ALBRECHT'S ELECTION WAS A SETBACK FOR THE COALITION IN BONN. IT MAY SERVE TO UNDERMINE THIS PARTNERSHIP AND WILL ALSO GIVE THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS A PSYCHOLOGICAL BOOST IN THE UPCOMING BUNDESTAG ELECTION. (CONFIDENTIAL) BONN 851 (LIMDIS) AND (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) BONN 763, 1/16.)

5. ROMANIA: ANTI-EMIGRANT CAMPAIGN

TAKING THEIR CUE FROM CEAUSESCU'S DECEMBER 3 CHARACTERIZATION OF EMIGRANTS AS DESERTERS, ROMANIAN MEDIA HAVE MOUNTED AN ANTI-EMIGRANT CAMPAIGN DESIGNED TO DAMPEN THE EXPECTATIONS OF THOSE WHO MIGHT TAKE HELSINKI TOO LITERALLY. EMBASSY BUCHAREST NOTES THAT THE GOR, TORN BETWEEN ITS NEED FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE WEST AND ITS INTERNAL SECURITY REQUIREMENTS, APPEARS INTENSELY CONCERNED LEST EMIGRATION CONCESSIONS ALREADY GRANTED GENERATE A MULTITUDE OF NEW DEMANDS. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) BUCHAREST 292, 1/16.)

6. TORRIJOS' TRIP TO CUBA--SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY

IN ANALYZING TORRIJOS' CUBAN JUNKET, EMBASSY PANAMA POINTS OUT:

--TORRIJOS PRAISED CUBAN ACHIEVEMENTS, ESPECIALLY IN EDUCATION, BUT EMPHATICALLY STATED THAT SOCIALISM IS CONFIDENTIAL



ONLY ONE WAY--AND NOT PANAMA'S--OF ACHIEVING A JUST SOCIETY.

--HIS VARIOUS STATEMENTS ON THE CANAL WERE GENERALLY RESTRAINED AND STATESMANLIKE.

EMBASSY COMMENT: TORRIJOS' CUBAN ADVENTURE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN WELL HANDLED. HIS WARM RECEPTION HAS HELPED UNDERCUT, FOR A TIME, HIS LEFTIST CRITICS BUT, BY THE POSITION HE TOOK ON SOCIALISM, HE ALSO HAS REASSURED HIS CONSERVATIVE AUDIENCE. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) PANAMA 373, 1/17.)

7. THAILAND

A. THE TERRORISTS' DRY SEASON

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

THAI COMMUNIST TERRORISTS HAVE SO FAR FAILED TO MOUNT AN ANTICIPATED DRY-SEASON OFFENSIVE. THOUGH INSURGENT ACTIVITY HAS INCREASED IN THE NORTH, RTG OFFICIALS SPECULATE THAT THE TERRORISTS AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THAILAND MAY BE SUFFERING FROM SEVERAL ILLS:

--THE PRC, WARMING TO THAI POLITICAL INITIATIVES, MAY BE SEEKING TO BRAKE CPT INSURGENCY.

--THERE MAY BE DEVELOPING IN THE CPT A GENERATION GAP BETWEEN OLDER, CHINA-ORIENTED LEADERS AND YOUNGER ZEALOTS WHO SEE VIETNAM AS THE HOPE OF THE FUTURE.

--LARGE-SCALE ATTACKS OF LAST SUMMER MAY HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO DESTROY LOYALIST MORALE AND, FAILING IN THAT REGARD, BEEN GIVEN UP AS A TACTIC.

EMBASSY COMMENT: WE SEE NO CHANGE IN PEKING'S SUPPORT TO THE MOVEMENT AND, WITH FIVE MONTHS OF THE DRY SEASON REMAINING, IT IS TOO EARLY TO WRITE OFF THE POSSIBLE RENEWAL OF LARGE-SCALE ATTACKS.

B. THAI-LAO BORDER INCIDENT

CONSULATE UDORN REPORTS THREE THAI PATROL BOATS WERE FIRED
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UPON FROM THE LAO SIDE OF THE BORDER ON JANUARY 13, AND THEN RETURNED FIRE. NO DAMAGE WAS REPORTED IN THE SHORT EXCHANGE. (CONFIDENTIAL) BANGKOK 1034 (EXDIS) AND BANGKOK 1019, 1/16.) KISSINGER

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# Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994
**Channel Indicators:** n/a
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED
**Concepts:** MORNING SUMMARY
**Control Number:** n/a
**Copy:** SINGLE
**Draft Date:** 17 JAN 1976
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED
**Disposition Approved on Date:**
**Disposition Authority:** SmithRJ
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004
**Disposition Event:**
**Disposition History:** n/a
**Disposition Reason:**
**Disposition Remarks:**
**Document Number:** 1976STATE012708
**Document Source:** CORE
**Document Unique ID:** 00
**Drafter:** O: BELL
**Enclosure:** n/a
**Executive Order:** GS
**Errors:** N/A
**Film Number:** D760018-0928
**From:** STATE
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a
**Image Path:**
**ISecure:** 1
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760146/aaaaborm.tel
**Line Count:** 205
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
**Office:** ORIGIN SSO
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL
**Original Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a
**Page Count:** 4
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS
**Reference:** n/a
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED
**Review Authority:** SmithRJ
**Review Comment:** n/a
**Review Content Flags:**
**Review Date:** 15 APR 2004
**Review Event:**
**Review Exemptions:** n/a
**Review History:** RELEASED <15 APR 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <20 AUG 2004 by SmithRJ>
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld
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EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**
**Review Referrals:** n/a
**Review Release Date:** n/a
**Review Release Event:** n/a
**Review Transfer Date:**
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a
**Secure:** OPEN
**Status:** NATIVE
**Subject:** MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS
**TAGS:** PFOR, PORS, OVIP, EFIS, PGOV, SREF, LE, SY, PN, CU, IC, UK, IT, RO, GE, (FRANJIYAH, SULAYMAN), (ASAD, HAFIZ-AL), (TORRIJOS HERRERA, OMAR)
**To:** JCS MULTIPLE
**Type:** TE
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006